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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 24, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for August 24, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

SABAH / ZAMAN / EVRENSEL / CUMHURIYET: Terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan will be confined to his cell for twenty days reportedly for making PKK propaganda.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily claims that Ocalan was given a 20-day confinement penalty in his cell for recently saying that he could make a call for PKK to declare cease-fire, reportedly ahead of September 1 Peace Day celebrations.

CUMHURIYET: The report the MIT intelligence center presented to the National Security Council claimed that while the U.S. engaged in efforts to appoint an envoy who would work out a way for Turkey and the PKK to hold talks and negotiate, the U.S. at the same time reportedly entered into negotiations with the PKK on disarmament issue.

HURRIYET: U.S. Ambassador Ross Wilson said that the envoy the U.S. would appoint to coordinate the tasks with Turkey in the fight against the PKK was determined. Wilson also said that the envoy was a person whom Turkey knew very well and everybody would get surprised when his/her name would be announced.

SABAH: PKK reportedly made a press announcement in the Qandil Mountain in Iraq as a response to the U.S.'s call to PKK to lay down arms. PKK reportedly explained the conditions required for the disarmament of the PKK. AFP, Reuters, Associated Press, Al-Jazeera TV and Turkish Milliyet newspaper members attended the conference.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The Turkish war planes allegedly bombed the area around northern Iraqi territory. Meanwhile, KKK, which is the political wing of the PKK, reportedly recently issued a "Democratic Solution Declaration for the Kurdish Issue."

EVRENSEL: The daily finds it interesting that the CDs, which were sent to the U.S. to be decoded after being discovered during an operation Turkish authorities were conducting against Hezbollah six years ago, had been brought back by the FBI to Turkey's agenda in the days when Turkey is weighing the issue of contributing troops to the UN force in Lebanon. According to the daily, this move was aiming to diminish the surge of sympathy in favor of Hezbollah in the Turkish community through blurring the differences between the Hezbollah in Turkey and

Hezbollah in Lebanon.

**ZAMAN / EVRENSEL:** Van's Third Heavy Penalty Court will most probably issue a verdict today about the case of PKK defector Veysel Ates for his involvement in the Semdinli bombing on November 9, 2006. The court had already sentenced in a June 19 trial the non-commissioned officers Ali Kaya and Ozcan Ildeniz to 39 years and 10 months in prison.

**OZGUR GUNDEM:** The daily claims that National Directorate of Forests had been ignoring the fires that have reportedly been going on since June in the southeastern region. According to the daily, the fires in the southeastern region were not included among the recent disastrous fires listed by the National Directorate of Forests.

**ZAMAN:** The fire that broke out in a village of Yuregir district in Adana lasted 17 hours, burned 250 acres of land, and caused a material loss worth 1.5 million YTL.

**EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM:** The daily reported alleged inhumane practices taking place in Kurkculer Jail of Adana. The visitors of the inmates are allegedly being stamped on their wrists with a two-word statement in Turkish, "First comes the fatherland." One victim of this recent practice was reportedly the mother of a DIHA (Dicle News Agency) journalist who was arrested on February 15 as she was following in Mersin the demonstrations marking a pro-PKK anniversary.

**SABAH (GUNEV):** Seventh Army Corps Commander Lieutenant General Cahit Sarsilmaz and newly appointed Jandarma Regional Commander Brigadier Lieutenant Celal Citak paid a courtesy visit to the Mardin Governor Mehmet Kiliclar.

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**YENI SAFAK / SABAH:** Sirnak Governor's Office announced that five PKK terrorists surrendered themselves to security forces in Sirnak's Silopi district. The number of PKK terrorists who surrendered this year has reportedly reached 69.

**RADIKAL:** A military court issued a "non-jurisdiction" ruling regarding the Turkish planes' alleged bombing of two villages, and alleged killing of 38 villagers in Sirnak's Gabar Mountain in March 1994. State Security Courts of Sirnak and Diyarbakir also issued a non-jurisdiction ruling 12 years ago on the same case.

**SABAH (GUNEV):** Midyat Syriac Culture Association held a football tournament among the Syriac youth in Mardin to promote friendship among youth of Syriac community. The referees in the tournament were two Muslims.

**EVRENSEL:** Young people from Romania, Spain, and from various parts of Turkey came to visit ancient Hasankeyf district under a cultural project of Governor's Office of Batman.

**RADIKAL:** Mardin deputy from Motherland Party argued that two dams, which will together produce the amount of energy the Il?su Dam is expected to produce, should be built in Batman to save ancient Hasankeyf district.

**ZAMAN / BOLGE / EVRENSEL / CUMHURIYET:** Eleven members of Global Peace and Justice Commission rode their bicycles to the Incirlik Base in Adana to protest alleged presence of nuclear bombs in the base and against recent Turkish deliberations on sending Turkish troops to Lebanon.

**SABAH (GUNEV) / BOLGE / OZGUR GUNDEM:** Chamber of Pharmacists in Adana held a seminar for its members to give information about measures that could be taken against bird flu since it is high season for migratory birds and Adana is located on their migration routes.

**YENI SAFAK / CUMHURIYET:** Sirnak Governor's Office announced that an Iraqi national, who was trying to cross the border in

the area near the Habur border gate in Sirnak, was caught with 30 Glock brand smuggled pistols.

SABAH (GUNEY): Because of this year's higher levels of pistachio harvest, farmers fear that their produce will not get sold because of lack of pistachio exports capability.

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